

The MODERATOR's
REASONS

AGAINST THE

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Peerage-BILL,

Examined, and Answered.



L O N D O N:

Printed for J. ROBERTS, in *Warwick-Lane.* 1719.

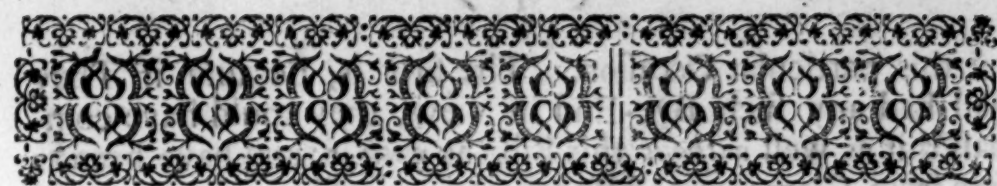
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REASONS

PERAGE-BILL



LONDON:
Printed for J. G. Smith in Warwick Lane, 1797.
(Price 10s. 6d.)



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HE MODERATOR coming forth with all the Appearance of Impartiality, tho' with all the real and determined Zeal possible for *one* Side of the great Question now in Agitation; it is worth while to consider the principal Points he has laid before the World.

His *first* Difficulty, propos'd in his Answer to the first Argument *for* the Bill (*p. 7.*) is this, That the present Ministers may be suspected of having some few *Jobs* in view; from their making a Number of Lords at once, by this very *Bill* now propos'd, which is declared to be designed to prevent making any such Numbers for particular *Jobs*.

I am jealous of *Ministers*, as well as *He*. But I will tell him a few Reasons, why I cannot give into his Suspicion upon

on this particular Occasion. The first is, Because if They had had any such Bye-End in view, they could have compass'd it as well *without* this Bill, as *with* it; and have been as free from Clamours and Reproaches, as They are upon the present Occasion. The *Power* in the *Crown* being untouched, They could, in this Time, in which *They* have had Influence, have introduced several Lords well chosen for their purpose. The Number of Lords made since the *King's* Accession, not being at all to be placed to *their* Account, but their *Predecessors*; They were free to begin their own Account; and by this Time might have had a steady and secure *Majority*, if this Author will be so hard as to imagine, that the present *Majority* it self is ready, near to a Man, to stand by Them in *Particular* and Unjustifiable *Jobs*. For without the Supposition of the present *Majority* being thus generally determined; the Addition of a *Number* will do but little Service; and *with* it, the *Addition* of a *very few* will make all secure. And the *Addition* of a very few would not look either daring or criminal, in Those who have not yet added more than *one* Lord to the Number They found. And this Consideration also is some Argument of no such vile Designs now in view, because the *Ministers* have never shewn any Disposition to use the Power They have, for the Increase of the Number of Lords. And it is not just to suspect Those, who have given no ground for Suspicion in this Point; whatever their other Faults may have been. Another Reason is, That the Success of the *Bill* now on foot will not more help them in any such Design, than their Influence for the Addition of more Lords, *without* it. Perhaps not so much. For, in the present Proposal, the Fifteen New Lords cannot be made choice of, solely with a View to any particular Jobs; but, if with any private View, to the passing this Bill, and to the preventing some Evils, particularly in *Scotland*. The Ministers can't avoid pitching upon some of the principal Families *there*, even whilst They know.

know, or suspect them, not to be thoroughly inclined to Themselves. And, as for the *Other Lords* to be added, it has generally been said, that the Choice of *Them* is not so much for future *Jobs*, as for the *present Job* of carrying this Bill: which certainly is the most probable Imputation that this Occasion furnishes. But now, could not any other Particular *Jobs* be better serv'd, even *without* this Bill; when the Ministers might make use of their Power, and fix upon Proper Persons, without any *other* View, but That of these supposed *Jobs*, to which alone They might accommodate their Promotions; according to a Famous *Precedent*?

This Author indeed says, that a late Flagrant Instance of making *Twelve Lords* for a particular *Job*, having been universally disapproved of, will be so far from being a Precedent for what *may be* done, that it will be a standing Proof of what *may not be* done, (*lb.*) When so ingenious a Writer can advance this, it is a very great and *standing Proof* that He was at a Loss for a better Answer to give. For how a *Precedent*, which is long ago past, and acquiesced in, without any publick judicial Mark, either of Punishment or Disgrace, should be any sort of Argument that a Thing *will not be done again*, which has been done *once* with Success; and this by Men who are supposed to have *Jobs* and wicked Designs in View; surpasses my Understanding. For let us suppose the worst, that these Evil Ministers should have made a Number of Lords for a *Job*, without this Bill; and should be impeach'd for it: What have They to fear? Their own present Friends in the House of Lords, who are supposed to be their Fix'd Friends, and to stand by Them even in their particular *Jobs*, will acquit Them. The Additional Lords will, for their own sakes, join in this. And the Noble Lord who made the *Precedent*, and has already defended it in the *House*, will join his Strength, and bring in his Number to justify Others in what will for ever justify Himself.

Since therefore, They have little to fear, from making a Number of *Lords*, supposing Them to have particular Bad Views; it is not very reasonable to Suspect them of these *Bad Views*, merely for doing *That* in a difficult and extraordinary Method, which They could as effectually and as securely do, by strengthening Themselves by degrees in a more common and easy Method; or by doing it all at once in a Way, for which They have already a *Precedent*; which none will stick at, who do not stick at such *Jobs* as make it Necessary.

Neither is it any more generous, than it is reasonable, to suppose that, amidst the mutual Divisions amongst the *Scotch* themselves, They should all be still ready to *Unite* to do *Jobs* for *Ministers*; or that the Majority of the *House*, which now appears on their side, would not greatly diminish, enough to carry Votes against Them, upon any such occasion. And yet without these Two unreasonable Suppositions, the *Fifteen* New *Lords* to be added, can never be supposed to make a Certain Majority for Unjustifiable *Jobs*.

But, what ought to be accounted a very sufficient Answer to this Difficulty in the account of the *MODERATOR*, is, That He himself is pleas'd to represent the *Ministers*, (p. 9.) as persuading the King against increasing the Number of *Piers*; whilst He is, in other Places, insinuating Evil *Designs* engaging Them to increase them. For if this latter be a *Just Insinuation*; (which certainly may lie equally against all *Ministers*;) then it is very fruitless and inconsistent to talk of *Ministers* doing what it is next to impossible to conceive them to do. And if the *MODERATOR* has no Remedy for this Increasing Evil, but the *Moderation* of *Ministers*, He must either let go his Insinuations of Terrible Designs, or set down in despair of a Cure. And that He himself sees and knows the Remedy He here proposes

poses is a *Mock-Remedy*, is plain from his proposing a Scheme afterwards, for an *Act of Parliament* to come in, to the Aid of the *Ministers*.

To the 2d *Argument* for the *Bill*, (p. 8.) He does indeed give so short and wide an Answer, that it seems not to belong to it. He reckons *Thirty One Lords* to be added, when, in truth, There can be no more supposed than *Fifteen*. He passes entirely over that part of the *Argument*, which is the *Principal*, and relates to the keeping *Property* in the *Commons* and their *Electors*, still. For He well knows that *Nine* of these *Fifteen* being already *Lords* in *Scotland*; and *Six* at most being to be taken from the *British Commoners*; the *Bill* does not remove much *Property* out of the Hands of the *Commons*; and therefore, does not at all in this Respect deserve his Censure, of doing the very thing it pretends to prevent; or his *Comparison* taken from a *Man's running into a Fire, to prevent his being burnt*. There are *Fifteen* added indeed by the *Bill*. But I have shewn that They might be added *without* it, and that there would not now need such a *Bill*, had it been the View of the *Ministers* to have got a Number of *Lords* ready for any private End of their own; or had the present Increase of the *House* been their Main Aim in this proposal. Of his Scheme to persuade Kings not to make *Lords*, which is his *Sovereign Remedy* for preventing *Rich Commoners* from leaving their Station, I have said enough; if any thing needs to be said, after once mentioning it.

As to his Answer to the *Third Argument* which relates to the *Scotch* part of the *Bill*; He acknowledges that *Private Persons* ought to submit to some Hardships, for the sake of *Publick Good*. So that then the Question will be, whether the *Publick Good* does not weigh on the Side of this part of the *Bill*. His Fears about Discontents in *Scotland*, would have been better

better placed on the other Side, according to the Best Judges ; supposing no Hereditary Seat in *Parliament* granted to Those of the *Scotch* Nobility, who have Claims quickly to be tried, the unavoidable denial of which Claims must cause a very great Flame both in *Friends* and *Enemies* ; and is likely to be esteemed a much greater Indignity and Breach of the *Union*, in a Point which was so essential to it, that without the Supposition of the Justice of such Claims, there had not been One Vote for this *Union* it self in *Scotland*. He needs be in no Concern about the *Sixteen Scotch* Lords. They seem very easy and ready to meet their Neighbours and Brethren in their own Country, without any Fear of much Reproach. They know how many Persons of the greatest Consequence will be pleas'd with their *Action*, in comparison of *Others* ; and They seem to think They should have been false to the Honour and Good of their Country, had They acted any other Part than what They have now acted : Several of them having resolved never to return more to *Parliament* upon the dishonourable Foot of *Election*.

His *Fourth* Argument, (p. 13.) was never made an *Argument* for the Bill, till He himself made it one; to shew that He is far from the Spirit of a True *MODERATOR*, or a Disinterested Person. The *Inclination* of the *Lords* towards the *Bill*, is no *Argument*, to be sure, to a *Commoner* ; but ought to awaken Him, and engage his Attention. But if this *Inclination* be founded only upon the Value of every single Peerage, and is of no Prejudice to the *Commons*, as such ; then it ought not to be made an *Argument* against it. Just as the *Inclination* of the *Commons* for keeping the *Number* of *Parliamentary Boroughs* limited, ought not to be any *Argument* to the *Lords* for desiring or pressing an *Increase* of them.

I now come to the *Main Part* of the *MODERATOR*'s Design, which was to propose a *Scheme* to remedy the *Evil* pre-

pretended to be remedied by this Bill; as effectually, and without the Inconveniences of the *present* Proposal. And that is, as He expresses it, (p. 15:) "That No Lord shall Vote in the *Upper House*, within Two or Three Years after his becoming a Member of it." I will now mention a *Reason* or *Two*, which, at first sight, seem very powerful against this Proposal. One is, what follows immediately in his own Performance, "This, says He, would, in all probability, put a stop to the increasing the *Number* of *Peers*, since Men of Active Spirits, and conspicuous for their Parliamentary Abilities, whose Requests to the Crown look most like Demands, would hardly care to be placed for so long a Time in a State of Inaction." To which, He presently adds, "That this would likewise leave the *Prerogative* of making *Peers* entire to the *Crown*." A very surprizing Method of leaving a *Prerogative* entire, to clog it with a *Condition*, which, in his own Opinion, would prevent its being exercised upon *Those*, upon whom alone, or at least chiefly, it ought to be exercised! How widely do I, and the MODERATOR, differ upon this Occasion? I would have the *Peerage* something so valuable, that it should be thought by the most Meritorious Commoner, something worth *meriting*: and He would have it in such a *Condition*, that None of his *Brother-Commoners* should think it worth accepting, but Men of *Unactive* Spirits, and *Low Abilities*. I wish to see the *Peerage* so circumstantiated, that the *Crown* may be even, as it were, confined to Men of conspicuous Merit, in its Promotions: and He wishes to confine its Choice to Men of the Meanest Abilities, and the lowest Genius. So that here are Two Reasons against his own Scheme, furnished by Himself. The first is, That a *Peerage*, upon his Project, will not be worth the Acceptance of a Man of *Great Merit*. The Second is, That the *Crown* will therefore be forced, upon many Occasions, to make the House of Lords overflow with *Unactive* Spirits, and Want of Merit. Thus does the MODERATOR consult the

C

Honour,

Honour of the *Commons*, by leaving the *Best* of them, without any Reason, to accept of a *Peerage*; and the Dignity of the *Crown*, by confining its Honours to Those who don't deserve them. If the *Commons* can be content with such a *Scheme*, which takes from the *Best* of them all *Inclination* to a *Peerage*; This alone will remove all their *Objections* against the present Bill, founded upon the *Few Vacancies* it will leave for the Reward of the Merit of *Commoners*. For *this Scheme* leaves None, that *Merit* will have any *Inclination* to fill. The *Crown* is but ill complimented by it. The *House of Lords* is favour'd by it with the Honour of all *Geniuses* below this *Author's* Description. And the *House of Commons* will, in a very disagreeable way, be forced to keep all its *Uneasy Merit* within its own Doors.

But I must not forget another *Objection* to *this Scheme*, which Every other *Writer* against the present Bill, except the MODERATOR, will presently make. For it is evident, that the *chief* Objection They all make is taken from supposed Differences between the *Two Houses*, in which Case the *Crown* will not be able to put an End to them, by creating a *Number of Lords*. Now the MODERATOR's Proposal will leave this Difficulty just where the *Bill* does. This *fatal Inconvenience* is not at all remedied by *Lords* made *without* a Power of voting: And therefore, the very Principal Objection against the *Bill* it self, lies as strongly against the MODERATOR's *Scheme*. If I might have leave to make use of the MODERATOR's way of Thinking, to persuade the Others, I would argue That since, according to the MODERATOR, it is highly Necessary that the Power of making *Lords*, for a particular Occasion, should be taken away; and since this cannot be done without taking away the Power of determining Differences between the *Two Houses*, by the Force of a *Number of New Creations*; it is certainly better that this last Accidental Inconvenience should be left to other

ther Remedies; rather than an *Evil*, big with the most certain and fatal Evil Consequences, should be effectually prevented.

I heard what was said in the *House*, by the *Noble Lord*, mentioned by the MODERATOR. He did indeed declare that the Main End in *his View*, was to preserve the *Liberty* of the *Votes* of that *Honourable House*. But yet, I shall not at all wonder, if That *Noble Lord* should find himself Disposed to make those Allowances on the part of *Scotland*, which might make every thing the more easy there; and not at all disposed to accept of the MODERATOR's Proposal, instead of the *present*, for these Reasons: Because it does not answer certainly even that *One End*, the Noble Lord declared to be in *his View*; unless you can suppose it *impossible* for *Evil Ministers* to chuse Excellent Tools two Years before they can work with Them; or to pick out Men of Implicit Faith, who may be ready at a Minute's Warning for any thing: Because this Proposal is hard upon the *Commons*, for whom that *Noble Lord* all along express'd the highest regard; absolutely discouraging, according to the Proposer himself, all Men of *Great Abilities* from thinking of *That*, which they now think of, as their Reward: Because it will fill the House of *Lords* with Those only who are no *Honour* to any House: And because it will be so far from leaving the *Prerogative* of the Crown Entire, that it will leave it no *Subjects* to exercise its Favour upon, but such as it ought not to be exercis'd upon.

The MODERATOR ends, as he began, with an Insinuation of Ends the *Ministers* are ashamed to own, and which yet do not appear. This shews that Satire is easier than *Argument*; and lays Him open to this obvious Reflection, That He, who, instead of Reason against a *Bill* proposed in *Parliament*, has recourse to *Personal Reflections*, and Insinua-
tions.

tions, leads the World naturally to think, That the *Argument* ran more strongly against Him than He is willing to own: And again, That it cannot be a good *Argument* against a *Bill*, That the *Proposers* have *Bad Designs*, tho' we can't yet find them out; especially when these supposed *Bad Designs* are such as might be carried on *without* this *Bill*; and are not at all certain of Success, after the passing it.

F I N I S.

